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ITEM 4(b):* ISSUES ARISING FROM THE RESOLUTIONS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AT ITS FORTY-SEVENTH SESSION ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT (UNCED)

Suggested Draft Report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on Plans to Implement Agenda 21 of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development

Note by the Executive Director

Summary

In the present note, the Executive Director submits a suggested draft report of the Governing Council to comply with paragraph 25 of General Assembly resolution 47/191 of 22 December 1992 which:

"*Requests* the Governing Councils of the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Development Programme and the Trade and Development Board to examine the relevant provisions of chapter 38 of Agenda 21 at their next sessions and submit reports on their specific plans to implement Agenda 21 to the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session, through the Commission on Sustainable Development and the Economic and Social Council."

The suggested draft report is designed to facilitate the Governing Council's discussion and formulation of its report to the General Assembly through the Commission on Sustainable Development and the Economic and Social Council. The report is subject to redrafting. Paragraphs printed in italics contain information that will be affected by a decision of the Governing Council at its seventeenth session. Consequently, the text would have to be redrafted to correspond to decisions of the Council.

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* Refers to the number of the item on the Provisional Agenda (UNEP/GC.17/1).

SUGGESTED DRAFT REPORT OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL OF THE UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME ON PLANS TO IMPLEMENT AGENDA 21 OF THE UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT (UNCED)

Introduction

1. The present report is submitted in response to paragraph 25 of General Assembly resolution 47/191 of 22 December 1992, in which the General Assembly calls for the Governing Council to examine Chapter 38 of Agenda 21 and report to the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session, through the Commission on Sustainable Development and the Economic and Social Council, on the Governing Council's specific plans to implement Agenda 21.

2. Further, in paragraphs 21 and 22 of that same resolution, the General Assembly calls for reports to be made on the steps taken to implement Agenda 21. The present report is designed so as to reply to that request as well.

UNCED reinforces UNEP's responsibilities

3. After reviewing Agenda 21, the Governing Council believes that virtually all of UNEP's activities are addressed in Agenda 21, and that the general thrust of Agenda 21 is to reinforce UNEP's role and mandates, without changing them significantly, and to point the way to changes in the emphasis, rather than major changes in the substance, of UNEP's programme.

4. Agenda 21 reinforces the basic catalytic and coordinating role of UNEP as laid down in General Assembly resolution 2997 (XXVII) of 15 December 1972, as well as the Governing Council's responsibilities for promoting international cooperation in the field of the environment, providing policy guidance for environmental programmes within the United Nations system, reporting on United Nations environmental programmes, reviewing the state of the world environment, promoting exchange of knowledge and reviewing the impacts of national and international policies and measures, especially on developing countries.

5. Agenda 21, in particular Section II on conservation and management of resources for development, coincides with Governing Council decision 15/1 of 25 May 1989 concerning strengthening the role and effectiveness of UNEP. In that decision the Council decided that UNEP should focus on eight areas of concentration: protection of the atmosphere, including climate change and global warming, the ozone layer and transboundary air pollution; protection of the quality of freshwater resources; protection of oceans and coastal areas; protection of land resources by combating deforestation and desertification; conservation of biological diversity; environmentally sound management of biotechnology; environmentally sound management of hazardous wastes and toxic chemicals; and the protection of human health and quality of life from degradation of the environment.

6. Agenda 21 also incorporates many of the elements proposed by the Governing Council in the annex to its decision 15/3, elements that it proposed to the General Assembly for possible inclusion in a resolution concerning the convening of a United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. The Agenda also contains many of the elements essential for sustainable development outlined in the Environmental Perspective to the Year 2000 and Beyond, formulated by the Governing Council and adopted by the General Assembly in resolution 42/186 of 11 December 1987. The

companion resolution to 42/186 was resolution 42/187 of the same date in which the Assembly welcomed the report of the World Commission on Environment and Development. The decisions of the Council at its third special session (3-5 February 1992) are also reflected in Agenda 21.

UNEP's plans to implement Agenda 21

7. Agenda 21 provides a significant opportunity to integrate developmental and environmental considerations into a programme of specific achievable actions to support sustainable development. It reinforces UNEP's role and responsibilities in the field of the environment, and UNEP can make an important contribution to Agenda 21's implementation. The Governing Council pledges full support to the implementation of Agenda 21 and has called upon the Executive Director of UNEP to make every effort to strengthen, orient and adjust as appropriate, UNEP's activities, programmes and medium-term plan and other activities, to help achieve the objectives of Agenda 21.

8. In this respect, the Governing Council at its seventeenth session has noted with satisfaction that the Executive Director has restructured the UNEP Proposed Programme of Fund Activities, with 12 subprogrammes, four of them new, to facilitate cross-referencing with Agenda 21 and to give a clearer overview of UNEP's integrated work programme during formulation, development, implementation and reporting. The Council also noted that UNEP's restructured programme was presented to the thirty-third session of the United Nations Committee on Programme and Coordination in 1992. The Committee incorporated UNEP's programme into the revised United Nations Medium Term Plan 1994-1995, giving high priority to nine of the environmental subprogrammes. The plan was approved by the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session.

9. The Council acknowledges that implementation of environmental assessment and management programmes is fundamentally the responsibility of Governments. The role of UNEP in particular is to provide encouragement, support and assistance in the development of the environmental components of Agenda 21 programmes, as well as to ensure the availability of information, assessments and, to the extent possible, technologies and resources to achieve sustainable development goals. Agenda 21 is to be carried out over a period of time with the involvement of many participants. UNEP as a catalytic and coordinating organization for the environment, would encourage and stimulate a wide range of organizations, including Governments and United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations and business, professional, scientific and community action groups, to take measures to achieve sustainable development goals.

Implementing Chapter 38 - International institutional arrangements

10. In implementing Agenda 21 the Governing Council attaches priority to Chapter 38 on international institutional arrangements, in particular subsection H.1, paragraphs 38.21 to 38.23, which pertain to UNEP. In line with the priority areas on which UNEP is requested to concentrate in paragraph 38.22, the Council has approved the actions described in paragraphs 11 to 38 below, which correspond to those of Chapter 38, paragraphs 38.21 to 38.23 concerning the United Nations Environment Programme.

Strengthening UNEP's catalytic role in stimulating and promoting environmental activities and considerations throughout the United Nations system

11. In promoting the integration of environment and development to achieve sustainable development, UNEP's traditional catalytic role will assume even greater importance and needs to be emphasized. UNEP's renewed actions to cooperate with other members of the United Nations system in advancing the agreed work in monitoring and assessment, for example, through the development of an early warning system under Earthwatch, and in providing assistance in cases of environmental emergencies as well as continuing to develop and implement international environmental law are all important examples of the catalytic work of UNEP. In addition, UNEP's new work in collaboration with other United Nations bodies, on environmental economics and natural resource accounting, on environmental indicators and in the development of a United Nations system approach to environmental impact assessment will encourage and support complementary action in the United Nations system. The Council will regularly review UNEP's existing catalytic efforts, such as the Regional Seas Programme, the Earthwatch work of the Global Environment Monitoring System (GEMS), INFOTERRA and the International Register of Potentially Toxic Chemicals (IRPTC), the education, training and capacity building and information work, with a view to enhancing their contribution to the implementation of Agenda 21.

Promoting international cooperation in the field of environment and recommending appropriate policies to that end

12. The Council will continue to exercise its responsibilities in promoting cooperation and recommending policies in the field of the environment and will give high priority to the additional priorities in Chapter 38 of Agenda 21. The Council will also monitor UNEP's work concerning the other chapters of Agenda 21 to ensure that UNEP's cooperation with other participants and its policy responsibilities are exercised to the fullest. The Council believes that the strengthening of environmental management programmes and of Earthwatch's monitoring, assessment, early warning and emergency response activities and improving approaches to environmental capacity building and environmental technology transfer are required in order to develop fully UNEP's cooperation and policy functions.

Developing and promoting the use of techniques such as natural resource accounting and environmental economics

13. The Governing Council, in anticipating the need for greater work in the field of environment and economics, has at its seventeenth session approved the strengthening of UNEP's programme and work in this area, with particular emphasis on environmental economics, natural resource accounting, environmental impact assessment, and the valuation of environmental and natural resources. The focus of this effort is on promoting the synthesis of economic analytical tools and instruments, testing and employing such tools, integrating environmental and natural resource accounting methodologies, developing policy instruments for environmental management and applying economic tools, especially for use in developing countries. This work will be conducted in close association with other United Nations organizations and development assistance institutions (e.g. World Bank, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations Regional Economic Commissions, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

Environmental monitoring and assessment, both through improved participation by the United Nations system agencies in the Earthwatch programme and expanded relations with private scientific and non-governmental research institutes; strengthening and making operational its early-warning function

14. The Governing Council believes that Earthwatch will play a significant role in the implementation of Agenda 21. The global environmental assessments emanating from this United Nations system programme, coordinated by UNEP, should provide a basis for identifying existing knowledge and data and ascertaining where they can be found; pin-pointing gaps and generating new knowledge needed to guide decision-making; gathering and evaluating specific data to discern and predict important environmental conditions and trends; disseminating knowledge and data to scientists and technologists; and providing decision makers at all levels with the best and timely information in useful forms. The programme needs to draw upon the best scientific research, technologies and information available, and to this end its cooperation with private and non-governmental research institutes will be expanded. Earthwatch will help to identify emerging problems, assess risks and issue early warnings where required. On the basis of its assessments, and in association with management, Earthwatch will contribute to proposing policies to reduce risks, combat environmental degradation and manage resources.

15. In response to General Assembly resolution 44/224 of 22 December 1989, UNEP has already begun to introduce early warning elements into Earthwatch's monitoring programmes. In cooperation with the United Nations Advisory Committee for the Coordination of Information Systems (ACCIS), UNEP is preparing a register of assessment-related environmental activities in the United Nations system as a first step towards establishing a continuing database or compendium. It is developing a computerized catalogue of geographic-based environmental data sets which will facilitate user access to such data through its Global Resource Information Database (GRID) network of cooperating centres. UNEP has published a guidebook for developing countries on preparing for drought and is developing guidelines for early warning of pollution of freshwater resources. UNEP is establishing additional relationships with government agencies, organizations and research institutes with a view to strengthening Earthwatch and its early-warning capability. The Governing Council accords this work high priority.

Coordination and promotion of relevant scientific research with a view to providing a consolidated basis for decision-making

16. The Governing Council is of the view that sound science and research, upon which UNEP's main achievements have been firmly based, must be at the heart of UNEP's work. UNEP's environmental assessment programme in support of Earthwatch, which encompasses GEMS, GRID, IRPTC and INFOTERRA, was founded to coordinate and provide information from the world's best science and research on all aspects of the environment - terrestrial, oceanic, atmospheric and renewable resources. This information led to the agreement on environmental management programmes in chemicals, the oceans and regional seas and human health. The results of UNEP coordinated science and research assisted Governments to reach environmental protection agreements on ozone depletion, hazardous wastes, climate change and biological diversity.

17. The Governing Council will ensure that UNEP's emphasis on sound research and scientific information will continue and be directed increasingly to the needs of sustainable development and implementing Agenda 21. For example, in light of UNCED, UNEP's desertification

programme has redirected its research toward the social impacts of desertification, the economic costs and linkages, and success stories of dryland protection. The terrestrial ecosystem programme is reorienting its efforts towards the application of economic tools in national policies for ecosystems management, for example, concerning forests, water, fisheries and agriculture. For the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) UNEP's climate programme is coordinating climate-related country studies. Within the World Meteorological Organization's World Climate Programme, the World Climate Impact Assessment and Response Strategies Programme (WCIRP), coordinated by UNEP and with the IPCC and OECD, will provide national inventories of greenhouse gas sources and sinks that will contribute substantially to the objectives of Agenda 21. UNEP is cooperating with WMO, the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of the United Nations Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (IOC/UNESCO) and the International Council of Scientific Union in the development of the Global Climate Observing System (GCOS) and, additionally, UNEP and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), WMO, UNESCO and the World Conservation Union (IUCN) are exploring the development of a Global Terrestrial Observing System (GTOS) to help determine the effects of climate change on terrestrial ecosystems. Many other components of UNEP's scientific and research activities will be directed to sustainable development issues.

Dissemination of environmental information and data to Governments and to organs, programmes and organizations of the United Nations system

18. UNEP's information dissemination activities for Governments and the United Nations system will increasingly focus on the needs of sustainable development and the objectives set out in Agenda 21. Such activities include the scientific information services of the environmental components of Earthwatch, GEMS, INFOTERRA, IRPTC and GRID; the provision of environmental data in usable forms; the preparation of publications on climate, fresh water, oceans, desertification, biological diversity, hazardous wastes and toxic chemicals, health, law and education; and regular news releases, special information packages, features, films, television, exhibits and maintenance of regular contact with Governments and other United Nations organizations.

19. The publication of The World Environment 1972-1992 in December 1992 was an important UNEP contribution to understanding the state of the world environment. Commissioned by the Governing Council, the 884-page report outlines the major environmental issues and trends over the past 20 years, from the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, held in Stockholm in 1972, to UNCED in 1992. It defines the causes and consequences of the decline of much of the world's environment during that period by linking the environmental conditions to human economic activity. It details the national and international responses to environmental conditions and sets forth an agenda of corrective actions, consistent with Agenda 21, for the community of nations. The Council believes the publication is an important benchmark for action on sustainable development and at its seventeenth session agreed to provide another world environment report 10 years hence.

20. At its seventeenth session the Governing Council also noted that steps will be taken to enhance further UNEP's information dissemination activities by approving a new approach to reporting on the state of the environment. The Council's action entails the regular preparation and dissemination of sectoral/topic-specific scientific reports, assessments and environmental data compilations on topics such as biodiversity, non-renewable resources, pollution and socio-economic aspects of environment and development. As stated in paragraph 19 above, it has requested a comprehensive state of the environment report every 10 years. To assist

the Governing Council to keep the world situation under review, it has requested the Executive Director to continue to make a statement at each Council session on key environmental policy issues, new environmental concerns, early warning, environmental events of global significance and actions that should be taken. These reports will be made available to Governments, the United Nations system and the public at large.

Raising general awareness and action in the area of environmental protection through collaboration with the general public, non-governmental entities and intergovernmental institutions

21. The Council believes that much of the information provided by UNEP mentioned in the foregoing paragraphs will raise the environmental awareness of the general public, the media, non-governmental entities and intergovernmental institutions. In addition, the Council has called upon the Executive Director to enhance cooperation with non-governmental organizations. As a consequence, UNEP will broaden its programme to reach out to a wider constituency of the non-governmental community action organizations, including those of women and youth, to encourage them to incorporate environmental protection and sustainable development activities into their current and future programmes of work. The format of UNEP's collaboration with community action organizations such as the World Organization of the Scout Movement, World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts and the Red Cross, will be applied in designing community-level programmes with Rotary International, the International Lions Club, the Young Womens' Christian Association and Young Mens' Christian Association, and used as a model for cooperation with other non-environmental NGOs, including those specializing in rural development.

Further development of international environmental law, in particular conventions and guidelines, promotion of its implementation, and coordinating functions arising from an increasing number of international legal agreements, inter alia, the functioning of the secretariats of the Conventions, taking into account the need for the most efficient use of resources, including possible co-location of secretariats established in the future

22. UNEP will continue to work closely with Governments and members of the United Nations system to develop international legal instruments, in particular guidelines and conventions, to help meet the information requirements of such instruments, to promote their implementation and contribute to the process of monitoring compliance. New areas of attention will be assistance to the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for the Elaboration of an International Convention on Desertification. UNEP will also consider measures for formulating a possible international legal instrument on the Prior Informed Consent (PIC) procedure, contained in the Amended London Guidelines for the Exchange of Information on Chemicals in International Trade and the FAO International Code of Conduct on the Distribution and Use of Pesticides. There will also be consideration of possible steps toward an instrument for protecting the marine environment against pollution from land-based sources.

23. Importance will also be placed on implementing recently achieved environmental agreements. High priority will be given to the early entry into force and effective implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity and to establishing its work programme and interim secretariat.

24. To promote further sustainable development through international environmental law, the Governing Council is also encouraging more active implementation of other international environmental agreements for which UNEP bears responsibility - the eight regional seas conventions, the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer, the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer and its amendment, the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and the Bonn Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS). The Council will also ensure that the UNEP secretariat will continue to contribute to the work on other legal instruments, among them the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Further, the Council will review the needs for additional measures to strengthen international environmental law within the framework of UNEP's Montevideo Programme for the Development and Periodic Review of Environmental Law for the Present Decade.

25. Aware of the continuing need to assist Governments, especially in developing countries, to develop national environmental legislation, the Council has requested the Executive Director to provide increased assistance to Governments for this purpose and, to this end, to seek to work closely with UNDP in its Capacity 21 programme, as well as with other United Nations agencies and relevant international organizations.

26. Additionally, the Council is acutely aware of the importance of providing coherent coordination, cooperation and consultation among the environmental conventions and interim secretariats administered by UNEP, in order to improve the effectiveness of convention implementation, and has requested the Executive Director to promote further measures to that end.

Further development and promotion of the widest possible use of environmental impact assessments, including activities carried out under the auspices of United Nations specialized agencies, and in connection with every significant economic development project or activity

27. Drawing upon its experience in developing methodologies, guidelines and principles and in training in environmental impact assessment, and drawing upon the recent advances in methodologies and techniques in the field of environmental impact assessment, UNEP will seek to work within the Inter-agency Committee on Sustainable Development (IACSD), the new coordinating machinery under the Secretary-General's Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC), to introduce additional and appropriate environmental impact assessment procedures into the developmental projects and activities of the United Nations system.

Facilitation of information exchange on environmentally sound technologies, including legal aspects, and provision of training

28. At its seventeenth session, the Governing Council reinforced its earlier decision 16/33 to promote the transfer of environmentally sound technology through UNEP's Cleaner Production Programme, which facilitates the transfer of technologies and management tools that reduce emissions at the source and conserve raw materials and energy. It also authorized initial steps for UNEP to consider ways to develop international guidelines on information exchange between exporters and importers regarding the environmental impacts of potentially harmful technologies.

29. UNEP's Industry and Environment Programme Activity Centre will continue to promote the exchange of information on cleaner production technologies, develop its Ozonaction information clearing-house to provide information on CFC substitute technologies for protecting the ozone layer, and carry out technology assessment work. The newly established UNEP International Environmental Technology Centre in Japan will provide information, training and consulting services on technologies used in environmental protection and enhancement of urban areas and freshwater lakes. The World Conservation Monitoring Centre (WCMC), a collaborative organization among UNEP, World Wide Fund for Nature, IUCN, and the World Resources Institute (WRI), will continue to provide assessments of the distribution and abundance of the world's species. UNEP's Collaborating Centre on Energy and the Environment in Denmark will continue to promote information exchange on energy technologies in the development of environmentally sound national energy plans. The Earthwatch programmes are encouraging the exchange of information and provision of training in information handling technologies as part of their work and the UNEP-led secretariats for the conventions on ozone, hazardous wastes and biological diversity are promoting the identification of valuable new technologies in their respective fields.

30. Convinced that the transfer of technology is central to protection of the environment and the needs of developing countries, the Governing Council will continue to promote, where possible, the flow of information and training for new environmentally sound technologies in each of UNEP's programmes.

Promotion of subregional and regional cooperation and support to relevant initiatives and programmes for environmental protection, including playing a major contributing and coordinating role in the regional mechanisms in the field of environment identified for the follow-up to UNCED

31. Recognizing that many environmental problems can be solved only through regional collaboration, the Governing Council notes with satisfaction that UNEP's existing programmes devote substantial emphasis to regional cooperation. The Regional Seas Programme and its subregional programmes represent a world-wide regional approach to protecting oceans and coastal areas. The programme for the Environmentally Sound Management of Inland Waters (EMINWA) represent another example of a regional approach, as do the Cairo Programme for African Cooperation of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN), the Action Plan for the Environment in Latin America and the Caribbean, the Plan of Action of the Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for Environment (CAMRE), and the support to environmental programmes in Europe and to subregional programmes in Asia and the Pacific.

32. UNEP recently developed new, bilateral cooperative environmental programmes with the United Nations Regional Economic Commissions. Through the Committee of International Development Institutions on the Environment (CIDIE), it cooperates with the regional development banks and with UNDP/United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office in implementing the Plan of Action to Combat Desertification in the Sudano-Sahelian region.

33. The Council has encouraged the Executive Director to enhance these and other regional cooperative activities whenever possible and to explore constructive new regional cooperative work in support of Agenda 21.

...

Provision of technical, legal and institutional advice to Governments, upon request, in establishing and enhancing their national legal and institutional frameworks, in particular, in cooperation with UNDP capacity-building efforts

34. The Governing Council at its seventeenth session approved a Proposed Programme of Fund Activities for UNEP, which includes an expanded programme of capacity building in virtually every area of UNEP's work. The Governing Council is determined that capacity-building will become an even greater field of UNEP's priority attention. To highlight the priority placed on capacity-building and to focus this work more clearly, a separate subprogramme section has been introduced for "Capacity-Building for Environmentally Sound and Sustainable Development", which seeks to enhance UNEP's existing capacity building and training activities. All other UNEP subprogrammes contribute to the realization of capacity-building designed to coordinate and strengthen the analytical, policy, institutional and practical capabilities of countries to pursue sustainable development.

35. Meanwhile, UNEP has joined other United Nations organizations and agencies to contribute to UNDP's Capacity 21 programme. The UNEP secretariat has developed a proposal for enhancing UNEP's capability to provide capacity building services to developing countries and is exploring the possibility of its broad cooperative use with UNDP, bilateral assistance agencies and with international lending institutions through the CIDIE. Additionally, in collaboration with UNESCO, the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), UNDP, Governments and universities, UNEP recently established an additional course for environmental managers from developing countries at Adelaide University (Australia), which supplements similar training programmes at universities in Finland, Germany, Switzerland and the United States. UNEP is continuing its cooperation with UNESCO in the International Environmental Education Programme to give an environmental dimension to national educational systems.

Supporting Governments, upon request, and development agencies and organs in the integration of environmental aspects into their development policies and programmes, in particular through provision of environmental technical and policy advice during programme formulation and implementation

36. Through UNEP's current technical assistance activities in each programme area, the growing International Environmental Education Programme, the enhanced capacity-building efforts throughout the United Nations system, the contribution of a restructured Global Environment Facility (GEF) and other measures taken to carry out Agenda 21, the Governing Council believes UNEP and the other members of the United Nations system will increasingly provide assistance to Governments in integrating environmental concerns into development policies and programmes. In reviewing the Proposed Programme of Fund Activities at its seventeenth session the Governing Council ensured that activities to assist developing countries to assess, monitor and manage environmental problems in accordance with national objectives and priorities were reflected in major programme areas, particularly in the work of the regional environmental programmes, and in Earthwatch programmes. UNEP has also given prominence to strengthening the organizational, administrative, legislative and planning infrastructure in its Clearing-house, international law and capacity building programmes. Each of UNEP's environmental management sectors has incorporated means for assistance in formulating policy and provision of technical advice and training. The Council will keep this mandate and UNEP's programmes under continuing review and report on them accordingly.

Further developing assessment and assistance in cases of environmental emergencies

37. The Governing Council believes there is a need to develop further assessment and assistance to countries in cases of environmental emergencies. The Council also believes that the United Nations can assist in meeting this need. At its sixteenth session in 1991, the Council, in its decision 16/9, endorsed the Executive Director's proposal to develop on an experimental basis a "United Nations centre for urgent environmental assistance acting in cooperation and in coordination with other United Nations agencies, focusing on assessment of and responses to man-made environmental emergencies." The Council noted at that time that a number of Governments and United Nations agencies had emergency capabilities and centres which, it hoped, a United Nations emergency centre might complement and reinforce. At its seventeenth session, the Council reviewed the work of the Centre and decided to continue the Centre's experimental phase for two more years. It recommended that in that time a number of changes should be made in the Centre's direction before the Governing Council could make a final decision on its future.

38. With regard to emergency preparedness, the Council calls attention to UNEP's Awareness and Preparedness for Emergencies at the Local Level (APELL) programme, which is carried out in cooperation with private industry. The programme helps local communities to be alert to and develop their own emergency response plans for industrial hazards. With a network of 69 national focal points, the APELL programme disseminates and exchanges information and offers training and assistance in the case of emergencies. It provides an excellent example of capacity-building and of implementing the emergency response called for in Agenda 21.

Implementing Chapter 38, paragraph 38.23

39. Agenda 21, paragraph 38.23, calls for greater expertise and financial resources for UNEP to perform its Agenda 21 functions. It also calls for closer cooperation and collaboration with other organizations, the strengthening of UNEP's regional offices without weakening its Nairobi headquarters, and the intensifying of cooperation with UNDP and the World Bank. At its seventeenth session, from 10 to 21 May 1993, the Governing Council approved an appropriation of $____ million for a core programme for the biennium 1994-1995 from the Environment Fund of UNEP. It approved an additional appropriation of $____ million for use as and when additional resources became available.

40. The Council noted with concern that the 1992 target of $100 million for contributions to the Environment Fund, which it had agreed upon at its fifteenth session in 1989, had not been achieved. Rather, 1992 contributions were estimated at $63.95 million, well short of the target. Consequently, the Council called upon all Governments to contribute to or increase their contributions to the Environment Fund.

41. Since the Conference at Rio, the UNEP secretariat has held numerous discussions related to UNCED with development organizations within and outside the United Nations system, most notably the regional development banks, both bilaterally and within the framework of CIDIE and GEF. United Nations agencies and programmes have held detailed discussions on the implementation of Agenda 21 within the framework of the United Nations Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) and its Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development.

42. As to strengthening UNEP's regional offices, at its fifteenth session, in 1989, the Governing Council endorsed the strengthening of UNEP's regional office system when resources became available. The Council regrets that there have not been sufficient resources to achieve this, and

it has called upon member Governments to seek to increase their contributions in the years ahead. The Council welcomes the Executive Director's expression of intention to strengthen UNEP's regional offices to enable them, along with other duties, to contribute to the implementation of UNCED at the regional level.

Highlights of the implementation of other aspects of Agenda 21

43. The Governing Council notes that UNEP's responsibilities for implementing Agenda 21 go well beyond the specific actions called for in Chapter 38 of Agenda 21. In addition to those actions, major UNEP contributions to UNCED and Agenda 21 are highlighted in paragraphs 44 to 51 below.

Protection of the atmosphere (Chapter 9)

44. UNEP will work closely with Governments and United Nations agencies in supporting the implementation of the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer and its Montreal Protocol and of the Framework Convention on Climate Change, in particular through the coordination of climate-related country studies and through encouraging education and awareness-raising programmes. UNEP will also support and participate in research, monitoring, observing and assessment programmes, specifically the World Climate Programme, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the Global Climate Observing System.

Combating Deforestation (Chapter 11)

45. UNEP will cooperate fully with Governments and United Nations agencies in further work on the development of the non-legally binding authoritative statement of principles for a global concensus on the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests. It will also take part in the coordination of global and regional forest assessments and in the development and dissemination of forest data.

Managing Fragile Ecosystems: Combating Desertification and Drought (Chapter 12)

46. UNEP will work closely with the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for the Elaboration of a Convention on Desertification and its Secretariat in developing the Convention. UNEP databases, assessments and information on a national desertification strategy, as well as the advisory service in international law will be made available for the negotiators' use.

Protection of the oceans (Chapter 17)

47. The Governing Council at its seventeenth session decided to convene in January 1994 an intergovernmental meeting on the protection of the marine environment from pollution from land-based sources.

48. For the organizers of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island States, UNEP will cooperate fully in holding regional technical preparatory meetings and in working out the preparations for the conference, making available support from its Regional Seas Programme and funding for participating experts.

Environmentally sound management of toxic chemicals (Chapter 19)

49. At its sixteenth session, in 1991, the Governing Council requested UNEP's Executive Director to consult with ILO, World Health Organization (WHO) and others to develop proposals for an intergovernmental mechanism for risk assessment and management of chemicals. Paragraph 19.76 of

Agenda 21 invites the Executive Heads of UNEP, ILO and WHO to organize an intergovernmental meeting within one year to consider the establishment of an intergovernmental chemical safety forum which the UNEP secretariat is now preparing to organize with its partner agencies in the United Nations.

Global Environment Facility (GEF)

50. The Governing Council recognizes that the GEF can serve as an important source of funding for the implementation of Agenda 21, and the Council places high priority on UNEP's cooperation with the World Bank and UNDP in implementing the work of the GEF. At its seventeenth session, in May 1993, the Council endorsed UNEP's participation in GEF's post pilot phase, noting UNEP's special mandate as the principal United Nations environmental body and bearing in mind the recommendations concerning GEF in Agenda 21. The Council noted the progress achieved so far in restructuring the Facility and welcomed the invitations for GEF to serve as the interim funding mechanism for the Conventions on Biological Diversity and Climate Change.

Strengthening the role of major groups

51. For years, through its Outreach programme, UNEP has carried out active programmes of environmental cooperation with groups of women, children and youth, non-governmental organizations, local authorities, business and industry, scientific and technological communities and others. In the months ahead, these efforts will be enhanced and activities with new groups will be considered, with a view to promoting cooperation on sustainable development.

Additional Governing Council actions to enhance implementation of Agenda 21

52. In addition to the numerous actions outlined above, the Governing Council has initiated or reviewed a number of other actions to implement Agenda 21.

Cooperation between UNEP and the Commission on Sustainable Development

53. The Governing Council looks forward to cooperating fully with the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) as the Commission carries out its function of reviewing and monitoring progress and providing appropriate recommendations to the General Assembly in the implementation of Agenda 21 (paragraph 38.13). UNEP will publish reports on its activities concerning implementation (paragraph 38.4) and will participate in the review of CSD's work (paragraph 38.11) to be carried out by the Economic and Social Council.

Governing Council decisions on the strengthening of UNEP

54. The Governing Council intends that UNEP will play a vital role in the implementation of Agenda 21 and the Council's regularly seeking ways to strengthen UNEP. At its fifteenth session, the Council proposed a number of measures to improve UNEP's effectiveness and the Council will review UNEP's activities periodically to see what additional measures may be required to strengthen UNEP's implementation of Agenda 21.